

AGRICULTURAL ADDRESS

11

OF

Tenn.

COL. HENRY J. CANNON,

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL

AGRICULTURAL FAIR

OF FAYETTE COUNTY,

HELD AT

SOMMERSVILLE, WEST TENN.,

OCTOBER 16, 1855.

MEMPHIS, TENN.:

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SOMMERVILLE, November 9. 1855.

Col. H. J. CANNON, *Dear Sir* :—

We were appointed a committee to convey to you the thanks of the Fayette County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, for your appropriate, interesting and eloquent address, delivered on the occasion of our recent Fair at Sommersville, and to ask of you a copy for publication.

We trust that you will yield to this request of our Society, and furnish a copy of your address for the purpose indicated. Very Respectfully,

CALVIN JONES,
L. M. SCOTT,
J. T. RIDLEY.

To Hon. Calvin Jones, L. M. Scott, Esq., and J. T. Ridley, Esq.

GENTLEMEN :—Your note, dated 9th inst., tendering me the thanks of the "Agricultural and Mechanical Society of Fayette County," for the address delivered by me, on the occasion of their late Fair, at Sommersville, was read last evening.

In compliance with the expressed will of the Society, and the wish of yourselves, I herewith furnish you a copy of my address for publication.

To the Society, Gentlemen, be so good as to present my sincere thanks for the very complimentary terms in which they have been pleased to characterize this effort of mine; and for the kind manner in which you have conveyed them, accept, for yourselves, my gratitude.

Very Respectfully,

H. J. CANNON.

MELTON, Nov. 19th, 1855.

ADDRESS.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Fayette County
Agricultural and Mechanical Society:*

I must be permitted to assure you, it is not in the hackneyed tone of apology, that I announce to you on this important occasion, my positive distrust of my ability properly to discharge the high and responsible duty I have assumed in consenting to address you, at this, your *first* Annual Fair. And, if I hesitated at first, in accepting this task, so kindly tendered, and insistingly urged upon me, imagine my feelings, when, in concentrating my mind to its performance, I commenced contemplating, and endeavored to grasp the magnitude of the subject before me. At the outset, I was bewildered, and, when, as I proceeded, expanse after expanse, untrodden by human foot, or unpierced by human visions, opened up before me; when I found the vast field for careful thought, extended research and profound investigation, the kindred sciences of Agriculture and Mechanics called upon me to explore—when I beheld it as extended as earth, as high as heaven, and as deep as the unplummelled ocean—when I saw it as magnificent as mountains, valleys, man and God combined could make it, and *felt* it as important as *life itself*—I was truly appalled at the great and overwhelming responsibility I had undertaken, and would, most willingly, have placed its Atlantean weight upon other and stronger shoulders. But it was too late, and I felt it was cowardly in me to desire it. And when I reflected, that for the last twelve or fifteen years of my

life, I had withdrawn myself from all other pursuits, and whether for weal, or for woe, had embarked my fortune, mind, energy and even my enthusiasm—my all, in the noble cause of Agriculture: and, recollecting, too, the honorable and responsible relation I sustained to its great interests, by appointment from the Executive of the State of Tennessee, in casting around for some support, that sublime old Roman apothegm, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*," come to my relief, and I resolved to put my head and hand to the work; and although I feared the laborer might prove unworthy of his hire, I felt I could not, with propriety, decline this position; and I am now before you, willing to do *even humble work*, surrounded and sustained, as I see I am to-day, by such worthy and able co-laborers in so glorious a vinyard.

I am a firm believer in man's FUTURE SUCCESS and HIGH DESTINY. He has

"A heart to hew his name out upon time
As on a rock, then in immortality
To stand on time as on a pedestal."

He was created in the *image* and in the *likeness* of God; and he has already by the march of his mighty mind, and the strength and skill of his giant hand, carved his holy impress deep into the core of the world—and is, even now, reaching forth his Ægean arm to grasp the dazzling diadem of complete and triumphant success. He has done much to deserve it—but the time is not yet;"

"—— To climb steep hills
Requires slow pace at first."

The glittering crown recedes; and, as it eludes his anxious embrace, it encouragingly invites him on to a higher ascent, a still loftier aim and still more ennobling achievements. Disappointed and almost *disheartened*, he stops and gazes—he breathes hard, hesitates and trembles; and, as he is sinking to earth, SCIENCE, in all her strength and smiling loveliness—the bright and beautiful impersonation of TRUTH itself, approaches him, and, with a skillful touch of her wand, she raises him up,

steadies his foot hold, and, with its magic wave, points him back to the many trophies along his path. She recalls to his memory the many triumphs he has achieved, the many victories he has won—shows him the immense altitude he has already attained—unscrolls the bright future to his astonished vision—and partially unfolding the glorious mysteries of the inner temple itself, in the softest strains of soul-inspiring music, she sings him EXCELSIOR! And with a shout and a bound, as if inspired, he cries out, ON TO VICTORY!—leaps *forward* and *upward*—makes a new start in his noble career and proves his God-like lineaments correct.

Man has accomplished much—but the time is not yet. The summit of

“The steep where Fame’s proud temple shines afar”

has not been reached. Man, however, in the fruition of so much of greatness and of triumph, and in fulfillment of his high destiny, must attain it. Under the broad and fostering wings of *science* and *association*, the task will be accomplished—the TRIUMPH will be sung, and man will fling his future,

————— “Like a comet, out,
Far splendoring the sleepy realms of night.”

Already have the great achievements of thousands of their zealous votaries proved how potent is their power to crown with unfading laurels their devout worshipers. Columbus, poor and unheralded—begging his way from court to court—regardless alike of the scoffs of the world, the jeers of the great and the cold contempt of kings, walked amid the pomp and pageantry of Princes, and all the blazing splendors of courts and thrones, with spirit unbroken and soul unawed, sustained, as he was, by a burning and inextinguishable feeling of enthusiasm and consciousness of knowledge, enkindled at the sacred shrine of SCIENCE *alone*—*watching* daily, *wearying* never, until he, *at last*, seized a torch and lighted it at *their* joint PROMETHEAN ALTAR. He raised it on high—gazed upon its uplifted flame, and, in thankful adoration he ejaculated a prayer to heaven, as he cast it across the broad Atlantic, upon its pathless mission.

Aimed at Asia, it fell upon America, and what a missile of mercy it has proved to man! It has illuminated and emblazoned a *new world* to the astonished vision of mankind.

And, in little more than *two centuries*, this new world has been subdued and peopled; a work, the so rapid and so successful consummation of which, if we take into consideration the many trying circumstances under which it was done—the many and mountain high obstacles that were overcome, and the immensely important and magnificent results it has given to the world, seems to us, at this day, but the wonderful *outbreak* of some mighty *enchantment*. It has placed in man's hands a scepter more potent, and on his head a crown more glittering, than was ever wielded or wore by the fabled Gods of antiquity.

• This country was *subdued* and *settled*; and the introduction of the arts of civilization—the inculcation of the duties of Christianity—the discovery and successful application of steam to its thousand great and glorious purposes—railroads, almost annihilating time and space—floating palaces, upon our streams and seas, defying wind and currents, and dealing out either death and destruction to our enemies, when occasion requires, or devoted to the pleasures and the profits of the most peaceful pursuits of life—mountains scaled and mountains tunneled—rivers spanned without a pier—oceans practically bridged across—the useful and glittering treasures of the earth disemboweled, for the comfort and luxury of mankind—commerce whitening every sea—chemistry, in its magic, almost life-giving combinations—astronomy, in its sublime, soul-ennobling and Heaven-piercing discoveries—and the lightning of God himself, caught, brought down to earth, and chained as to a chariot, and, thus controlled, taught a language which is not only heard and understood across *continents*, but, borne along the bed of old ocean, wakes up the mighty monsters of the deep, and, in its reverberations, makes the circuit of the *great globe itself*, almost in an instant of time—*these, these* are some of the monuments which map out—*these* are some of the trophies which bedeck man's high and holy pathway, and echo his EUREKAS. They

tell of his mighty past, and foreshadow his glorious, his God-like future.

'Tis true, in these, our degenerate days, we have no Jupiter, in his grateful munificence, to bestow either upon the sons or daughters of Melisseus the Horn of Amalthea; and Aladdin's Lamp has been lost to the world. But

"There is a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will;"

And we still have the same strong arm, the same indomitable will, the same immortal mind, all strengthened by former successes; and science, in still augmenting beauty and vigor, beckons us on, and urges us to renewed and still stronger efforts. She inculcates a more intense purpose, a more patient perseverance, and *harder work*; and she proclaims in trumpet tones, these constitute the genius of this utilitarian age; these are the genii of the soul-inspiring mythology, the soul-thrilling magic of the nineteenth century.

And will we not continue willingly to worship at this sacred shrine? Man must do so, or *progress* dies, and his *destiny* is unfulfilled.

Among the many highly-important objects that are now attracting the attention, and the great improvements that are now calling forth the enterprise, and engaging the intellect of man in this enlightened age, none stand more prominently forward and foremost than AGRICULTURE and its helping hand-maiden, the MECHANIC ARTS. In their high aims and grand results, they combine and comprise the essential elements of national greatness and human happiness the world over; and it is to honor those high purposes, and to promote those great results, that we have associated ourselves together, under the corporated name of the "Fayette County Agricultural and Mechanical Society," and have met with each other, upon this highly interesting occasion; and I am both proud and happy in being enabled to proclaim this day, that the assemblage and exhibition are not unworthy of the high reputation and distinguished character of our county.

In doing this, however, we have taken but the first step—made but the first necessary movement in the great work before us. Here, as elsewhere, and all along man's rugged highway, *EXCELSIOR* must be our motto, and *hard work* the motive power, if we would make progress in this noble contest—and Hippodrome never invited to one more worthy of man's high faculties—if we would elevate Agriculture and his labor to their true position. These constitute the deep foundation stone and beautiful Corinthian capitol of his greatness everywhere, and in this loved land of liberty especially. And shall I this day appeal in vain to the educated, intelligent, and highly-prosperous people of this county, to come up and make this Society more worthy of its name, and Fayette the Banner Agricultural Society of Tennessee. The *will* is all that is wanting to accomplish this praiseworthy purpose. What our forefathers ennobled, let us not degrade!

And is there not in the scene before us something to incite us to action? What spectacle so well calculated to call up all the kind, noble, and generously emulative feelings of our nature—to engender thoughts of a moral and practical character, and to beget those profitable reflections so properly connected with our past history and future destiny, as the moving and living panorama we behold around us? Let us deal in contrast for a few short moments. It may not be devoid of an instructive philosophy. Centuries in the history of nations and the progress of mankind, are but as days in the lives of individuals. Can you by comparison, even in your most comprehensive and vivid imagination, fully conceive the great and striking difference between the character of the scene presented little more than a quarter of a century ago, on the grounds where I address this assemblage, and the one which now gladdens our hearts and greets our enraptured eyes? *Then*, the spot upon which I now stand, and all around us, was one unbroken wilderness, whose solitude was untrodden or undisturbed, save by the step or presence of the red man, and the stealthy tread or glaring eye of the wild tenants of the forest. Its silence was that of death, save when invaded by the sound of the air among its primeval

forests, the wild whoop of the Indian, or the harsh scream of the savage beasts of prey. *Now*, we hear everywhere around us the gratulating voices of freemen, the hum of civilization, and the hammer of industry. Where the savage wigwam *then* reared its humble roof, we *now* behold rising in stateliness and grandeur the abodes of civilized man, institutions devoted to education, and temples, with their heavenward-pointing spires, made vocal with Christian chants of praise and thanksgiving to the living God.

These are some of the early, first fruits, in America, of those potent co-workers and concomitants of civilization—*Agricultural enterprise* and *Mechanical industry*. And should we not, on this festive occasion, offer up a loud, a general, and a heart-felt pean in their praise?

“Nothing has been more clearly demonstrated by the history of the human race, than that man’s natural state is the social state.” This law of his being adheres to him in all the varied relations of his existence. It is the source of his strength and power. And is it not remarkable, that that being the highest in the scale of finite existence, endowed with the largest share of intelligence, made in God’s own likeness, and second only to the angels, should be the most dependent on his kind for successful effort, his strength and his happiness? This, however, is the law of his existence, no matter what may be the particular phase of civilization in which he may live; and man has never been found in so degraded a condition as to dispense with it. “The roving Indian, the Lu-Fu cannibal, the Papean of New Guinea, the Bushman of South Africa, are all as subject to this decree of Nature as the most elevated and polished type of the Caucasian race.” It is to this tendency of man to the social state, that government owes its origin, society its happiness, and the Christian Church its concentrated faith and worship. The cloister of the cowed monk and the cell of the ascetic anchorite, is as much a perversion of man’s *religious*, as the cave of the hermit is of his *social* nature.

The principle of *Association* is the great element, not only of man’s security and happiness, but also of his strength and

power in the diffusion of knowledge, and in subduing and controlling the physical world. It is the Achimedian lever in all enterprises of public good, and is the striking feature in the rapid and unprecedented progress of the civilization of this age. By it, Rome was built, and Greece made great—by it, learning was preserved during the dark ages, and Peter the Hermit, in the sublimity of its conception, in the magnitude of its numbers, and in the importance of its results, preached the grandest *Association* Christendom ever beheld. It has given us Solomon's Temple, with its mighty out-birth Masonry. To it the world is indebted for Odd-Fellowship and the Daughters of Rebecca—the Sons of Temperance and the Social Circle. It is associated wealth and enterprise, fostered and encouraged by the government, that has raised England to her present proud and towering position of power and greatness, and placed France at the head of civilization, in the abstract sciences. And in the application of knowledge to discovery, the useful arts, the pursuits of life and the science of government, it has done for America the wonderful work of a *necromancer*. By it, Columbia sprung into existence to the rest of the world—Jamestown was settled—Plymouth Rock was prayed upon—the Indians were kept back—forests were felled—cities were founded—and Agriculture, and her sister, Mechanic Art, seated themselves side by side in their triumphal chariot, and started on their noble career in America. And, more glorious still, it gave us our Bunker Hill, our York Town, and our New Orleans—our Washington, and our Jackson—old Independence Hall, with all its thousand hallowed associations and recollections—its Fourths of July—its inspired Declaration, and world-wide, and world-admired Constitution, which in my *heart of hearts*, I do honestly believe, is capable of embracing, not only the entire continent of America, and all the isles adjacent, but the *great globe itself*, under the broad and protecting *Ægis* of its *sublime principles*.

Within the circumscribed limits of this address, I trust and feel, it cannot be expected of me to attempt even an enumeration, much less a detailed account, of the many advantages

and manifold fruits and blessings, flowing from a successful prosecution of Agricultural and Mechanical Industry. Its history dates from creation, and it would require the glance of man from the golden threshold of Heaven to do it justice. Volumes would be written without exhausting the subject, and we have only to look around us for one moment to be satisfied of this truth. *Every being that eats bread, or wears clothing is interested in it.* In their many and diversified relations, they combine the most important interests of all civilized nations. The enlargement of commerce—the extension of arts—the development of mineral wealth—the growth of manufactures, and the embellishment of civilization, are all, in a greater or less degree, dependent on the well-directed efforts, and the successful application of the capital, skill and industry, bestowed on these kindred pursuits. If they languish, a shock is experienced throughout the whole social system. They are the infallible Barometers by which to test the prosperity of every people. Nor will this be denied, when we take into consideration, that the capital in the United States, invested in husbandry and tillage alone, amounts to the enormous sum of *Six Thousand Millions of Dollars*, and that this *single interest exceeds all others combined, by two thousand millions of dollars.* These figures beget an enormous contrast, and are so large, in comparison with sums contemplated by us in our ordinary, every-day business, that we may fail, at first view, to appreciate them as they merit. And although the data are more deficient, it is as positively true that the labor employed in agriculture, largely exceeds that engaged *in all other pursuits put together.* The interest of commerce and manufactures, vast as they are acknowledged to be, and as important as they are to the welfare of the world, are dwarfed into insignificance by comparison.

But I will not fatigue you with further figures and details. We here find wholesome food for the philosophic and conscientious husbandman. Shall we then imitate the example of the good and faithful, or share the fate of the wicked and slothful servant, in the improvement of the mighty interests committed to our keeping?

Planters of Fayette, must I multiply words to make you fall in love with your exalted profession? for yours *is a profession*, and of the *noblest character*. It calls upon you for a greater grasp of intellect, and a more extended and varied combination of knowledge—

“ That wing wherewith we fly to Heaven,”

than any other avocation of man. Chemistry, Botany, Vegetable Phisiology, Geology, Mineralogy, Zoology, Entomology, Meteorology, Mechanical Phylosophy—aye, even the Moral, Political and Economical Sciences, all open up a vast and proper field for the widest and highest exercise of the physical and mental attributes of the Agriculturist. Independent of the actual profits arising from agricultural pursuits, there is something connected with the *cultivation of the Earth*, eminently calculated to induce the philosophic mind to serious and sublime contemplation. And it would even seem that the curse of God upon our First Parents was pronounced in mercy, and meant not the harshness its language appeared to convey.

“ Not a breeze

Flies o'er the meadow ; not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence ; not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shade,
Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasure unreprieved. ”

There is something in the fresh youthfulness of Spring, and in the ripe and luxuriant fruitfulness of Autumn, of inestimable treasure to the properly contemplative man. There is not a blade of grass, or ear of corn that does not afford curious, profitable and devotional speculation to the inquiring and cultivated mind. The inexhaustible pleasure in all those innocent enjoyments, derived from an intimate association with the fruits and flowers of the earth, and the gentle and innocuous inhabitants of the fields and woods, *is priceless*. Who can look upon the majestic *maize*, with its pendant, waving arms, and its graceful, feathery crest—the blooming and bearing *Cotton*, the Croesus of plants, with its touch of Midas—*Oats*, in all their richness and luxuriance—*Rye*, in its fertilizing and fattening usefulness—

Wheat, as it gradually rises from the ground, in all its vernal loveliness, until its ripe grain crowns the hopes of the husbandman with its harvest of plenty, like a golden shower of arrows shot down from Heaven, which, while they *pierce*, do not *pain* the bosom of their kind mother—the unpretending *Pea*, a fit emblem of my modest mother State, which, Rip Van Winkle-like, opens eyes and heart for our gratification, and returns more to the soil than anything except *clover*, generous, enriching clover—the *Grasses*, as modest and equally munificent, as they bow their velvet heads and invite your approach, fearless alike of your footsteps, or flaming sickle.

“There is even a scent upon the brier,
A tremulous splendor in the autumn dew—”

and in their decorating beauty,

“*Daisies* are white upon the church yard sod—”

and last, but not least, THE ROSE—

“Its breath
Is rich beyond the rest; and when it dies
It doth bequeath a charm to sweeten death.”

Oh! who can be in daily contact with such blessings and such beauties—who can daily see around him such kind and many-handed ministers to his every-day wants, his comforts, his luxury, his happiness, and not feel himself exalted, and his heart expand in thankfulness to that Supreme Intelligence, which surrounded him with so much of the good and the beautiful—and in *cursing* has *blest* him.

“’Tis here—that Nature loved to trace,
As if for Gods, a dwelling place,
And every charm and grace has mixed
Within the Paradise she fixed.”

But, my fair country-women,

“The world was sad—the garden was a wild,
And man, the hermit, sighed, *till woman smiled.*”

And God, in his great mercy, *gave you man*. We feel and acknowledge, in all its strength and sacredness, the divine idea, “that it was not good for man to be alone,” and that you are

emphatically "his help-meet unto him." You are here to share his responsibilities and his rewards. Recollect, then, that a home, to be loved, must be made *lovely*. And while, by your angelic smiles, you can irradiate man's hearth-stone, you can, by the lips of love, and the finger of hope, keep before him the radiant, the God-like motto, "*Upward and Onward*." And in his many rude encounters and arduous struggles with this world, you can, with your own fair hands, so bestrew his pathway with flowers, and bedeck it with evergreens, as to light it up in the splendor of loveliness, and thus facilitate his progress. And we know full well, this duty comes to you burdened with no clogging weight. For, as you, in your unstinting generosity of soul, impart pleasure and happiness to those around you, you cannot fail, by radiation, to receive it in return. In all the unselfish, enduring, and ennobling qualities of our nature, you are man's superior—but

"Woman, so perfect and so peerless,
Outstrips all praise, and makes it halt behind her."

Fulfill, then, your mission to man, and be unto him his help-meet.

Ladies, we are happy in having you with us to-day, and feel proud and encouraged by your approving smiles, and your clever handiwork on exhibition.

Fellow-members of the Agricultural and Mechanical Society of Fayette: I have much that I would like to say to you in detail; but I feel that it would be wrong much longer to detain you from the other, and, doubtless, more agreeable exercises and enjoyments incident to this *festive occasion*. I would like to speak of the footprints Science has already made in Agriculture and Mechanics, and, being more familiar with the former, to point out to you the high necessity there is for a more extended research in Agricultural Chemistry—a more positive acquaintance, *by analysis of the soil and its various productions*, with the elements of food necessary to their growth, and the best and cheapest means of supplying them when wanting—thus involving the whole broad question of tillage and manur-

ing—of the action of lime and gypsum—the source and supply of carbonic acid and ammonia—how plants grow—the functions of the roots, stems and leaves—of Geology and Mineralogy, in their connection with our soils—of the tools with which to till them—of Zoology and Entomology, as they develop the peculiarities, instincts and habits of the serviceable beasts or the noxious insects—of Meteorology, treating of the phenomena of the atmosphere—and of Natural Philosophy, in all its *vast wealth of domain*—of all these would I like to say something to you. But the field is too vast. Each subject is itself sufficient for a lecture, or an address; and each one of them would be found not only intrinsically interesting, but freighted with philosophic instruction of the gravest importance.

And here I must be permitted to allude very briefly to a *prejudice* that exists in the public mind against what is frequently, in derision, called “*book-farming*.” This is as unjust as it is unprogressive and degrading. What but learning and science, as detailed in *books*, have elevated man to his present proud and exalted position in the world? What is science but knowledge arranged and generalized? Our knowledge, upon all subjects, is, at first, but an accumulation of individual facts, which we frequently find, upon subsequent observation, to be of the same character. These we group and class together, and include them under one general head. One step further is made; and we find that some of these facts bear to each other the relation of *cause and effect*; and we arrange them in accordance with this observation. This once accomplished, and our *knowledge* becomes *science*, or “book-learning,” and, when applied to Agriculture, “*book-farming*,” if you please. Now, mark! In all this, we have simply changed the *form* and *arrangement*, and in no one particular, not even the most simple or remote, the *substance* of that knowledge, that we are acquiring every day of our lives. Now, where, I pray you, is this monstrous *bugbear*, to affright us from our propriety? Where this mighty spectre that stalks the land and places his paralyzing hand upon the devoted head of every planter who but *peeps* into a *book* for Agricultural information? *The prej-*

udice is preposterous and revolting! Scientific principles are nothing more than human knowledge, packed up in books in a portable form; and in them we find that information that concerns each one most, arranged, simplified and at our command; and every observing and practical man in Fayette has already learned his *rudiments in science*; it may be unconsciously, and even in spite of himself. But there is trash, as well as truth and knowledge, in books; and education and learning furnish us the touchstones by which to test them. Books, as well as plough-shares, *are fit tools* in Agriculture.

And here allow me to present to you, and earnestly urge upon your consideration, one of the most important suggestions which, in all of my reflections upon the very responsible duty I am now discharging, has occurred to me. It is this: in order to make our Association *lasting* and *useful*, we must endeavor, as far as possible, to make it *practical*; and to make it practical, we must make it a WORKING SOCIETY. If *action* makes the orator, *experiments* make the Agriculturist and Mechanic. We live not in the Golden Age, but under the hand and hard influence of an Iron one. The alchemists of old, thought metals, as well as plants, might be produced from seed; but neither the *seed* nor the *solvent* have ever yet been found—or if ever, the *Alkahest* has yet been given to man; it is emphatically, *Hard Work*. Planters of Fayette, work no longer with the alchemists—search not for seed which will spring up in a night, bear fruit, and enrich you in a day. “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”

Sir Humphrey Davy has truly said, “Nothing is more wanting in Agriculture than experiments, minutely noted and scientifically detailed; and the art will advance in proportion as it becomes *exact* in its methods.” We need experiments as much now as they needed them then. For, so far as scientific investigation has come to its assistance, Agriculture is as yet in its infancy. All other arts are far, very far, in advance of it. The Mechanic Art far outstrips it in all those definitely established and firmly fixed *certainities* in which Science so much delights. And is not certainty as much to be desired and as

eagerly sought after by Agriculturists, as by the members of any other art or profession? This must be accomplished by experiments. And if they cannot all be scientifically detailed, they can be at least carefully made, minutely noted, and practically reported to this Society. Here is my plan by which I propose to make every member of this Association a *working member*. Make it *positively obligatory* upon each one to make one or more experiments upon some subject embraced within the objects of this Society, *annually*. Let him closely observe everything connected with the growth or manufacture of the article, and, in a condensed form, report to us the result, and, so far as possible, exhibit it to the Society. This can be practically and easily done, in either one of two ways. The bill passed by the last Legislature, incorporating the Agricultural Bureau, contemplated, and has provided for, the establishment of auxiliary or District Societies, in each county, to be chartered by the County Societies. These are nothing more than neighborhood associations, as any *five* persons can form one. Now, suppose them formed all over the county (and the importance of doing so, *at once*, cannot be too strongly urged)—then this Society assigns to each one the particular subject upon which it must experiment; and each member, as far as possible, should make a different one. Or, if the District Societies are not formed, then the President, or the Society, may allot to the members of each neighborhood the performance of this duty. Either mode will accomplish my purpose. Without going further into details, at present, does it not, at once, strike every one what an increased *interest* would be enlisted in our cause, and what a *magazine* of practical and intrinsically valuable facts would be collected by us, and kept perfectly at our command? Nature needs interrogating more constantly and closely; and here is a mode by which we can do it profitably. And she is ever ready to answer our askings with a kind and ungrudging heart. In her great bazaar, we can all trade and all acquire. Here is an arena on which we may all prove victors; and Olympia never had stadium placed in one more sacred.

In intimate connection with this part of my subject, I must here be permitted very briefly to call your attention to another point of much importance. Allow me, then, suggestively to inquire, whether the principles upon which we award many of our most important premiums, are not radically wrong? In my opinion, much of our success depends upon the interest we can awaken in the public mind by our fairs and exhibitions; and it appears to me, there is no feature more *closely* to be studied, or of more *vital importance* than the *basis* upon which we build up our premium lists. It is the *corner stone* of our edifice, and should be squared and plumbed by skillful and judicious hands. Is it, then, right of itself, as a matter of proper agricultural and mechanical economy, or upon any other ground, to encourage our members to a heavy expenditure of capital, time and labor, upon any one article, or acre of land, by awarding premiums for the largest yield in corn, cotton, wheat, oats, rye, &c. This might answer as to ground peas, potatoes, turnips and such things; but it presents itself to me as a great wrong as to *corn* and *cotton*, and essentially and vitally so as to *small grain*; for my experience teaches me, upon all good land, even without manure, they are too prone to lodge: an addition of a little more "SILICA" to strengthen their stems might not be amiss. Would it not be better to encourage *experiments* upon a larger scale, by bestowing many of our best premiums upon such as are most *successfully conducted*—so arranging them that the smaller planter or farmer should have an equal chance in the contest with the larger one? And so of the mechanic. Should we not, then, as thinking, sensible and philanthropic members of society, encourage the agricultural and mechanical philosophy of reaping the largest return from the smallest investment of capital, time and labor? I notice most agricultural societies are, of late, strongly reproaching the idea of rewarding premiums to our *fed animals* equally reprehensive.

But at the *very foundation* of all this, so far as the agriculturist is concerned, lies the absolute and urgent necessity of not only improving, but of *keeping* what soil you have from

washing away from under and around you, thus silently, but steadily wasting the strength of your land, and subserving the miserable purpose of making *more mud* at the many mouths of the Mississippi. Do you ask me, how this is to be done? I answer, *without one moment's hesitation*, after a *ten years'* positive experience and a *convincing demonstration* upon my own plantation, **LEVEL YOUR LAND**—*do it, by all means, and at once : do it, for your own sake, for the sake of your children—for posterity and for the good of your country.* And *don't do it*, as is too often practiced, with “a *little fall*.” No, no! not even with a fraction—the *smallest fraction of an inch* in a mite, or in *twenty* should your rows be so long. The “*little fall*,” to which I allude, and which is most usually given by those who insist upon the least fall, is one inch to every twelve feet. To demonstrate beyond all cavil, the absurdity of such a practice as this, it is only necessary to compare this fall with that of the streams which receive the water, freighted with its *rich stealage* from your soil, after it leaves your lands. A fall of *one inch to twelve feet*, gives a fall of *thirty-six feet and eight inches to the mile*. Over such a fall a thousand rills course along your cotton-beds, *at a speed*, compared with which the current of the mighty Mississippi would present the appearance of *eddy water*. **LEVEL YOUR LAND!** and you may then discard your “hill-side ditches,” and save the space devoted to them, and the labor of making and keeping them open. *Do this*, and you wipe out those sickly hues from the face of your hill-sides, and get rid of those ghastly gullies, which glare upon you at every turn, and like Banquo's ghost, *tell of murder*. *Do this*, or stop *scratching* and *scarring* the bosom of your kind mother.

Mechanics of Fayette! we need and must have your hearty co-operation in our cause. As I have said, in all the skill, science and certainties, pertaining to your profession, you are far in advance of us. Go on, and keep so, if you can; for, in a generous spirit of emulation, we mean to overtake, and outstrip you, if possible. Your art, like ours, is coeval with creation. But it has long since emerged from that twilight which first enveloped it, and in which we are as yet groping

our way. You are engaged in a work in which the hand, body, and mind are all employed. Theory and practice, soul and body are there. "If the soil around blooms with more fertility—if the mariner ascends his bark, without hesitation, and dares the dangers of the deep and pathless ocean, with as great a feeling of security as in his boyhood he experienced, in his gambols around his paternal roof, or grounds—if the warrior now uses weapons, in comparison with which the lance borne by Achilles would be as insignificant and harmless as a lady's bodkin, in the tiny hands of a Fairy"—'tis to your influence, it is due. Your art raises man almost into a God, by giving him control and empire over matter. And no mind can fix bounds to your continued and rapid progress. The distinction which has heretofore obtained between the Mechanic and the Fine Arts, is idle, untrue, and cannot be maintained. Hand in hand with Agriculture, they march forward, and crowned with laurels, they all form around man,

"Radiant with arms, and beamy pride,"

a circle of love and protection—satisfying his physical wants—refining his moral and intellectual desires—and gratifying his highest and most cultivated taste for pleasure and beauty. Agriculture affords him

"Content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease, and alternate labor—useful life."

Mechanic Art gives employment to his reasoning faculties, and the tools of his patient industry—and "the Fine Arts are the fancy children of his imagination—the gems that drop from the rich casket of his mind—the realization of the dreams of his soul."

To the Principal, Teachers and young Ladies of the Model School—the Instructress and Pupils of the Primary School—and the Principal, Assistants, and young Gentlemen of the Male Academy, in behalf of the members of our Society, it affords me much pleasure to return our thanks for your inspiring presence, and zealous participation in the imposing cere-

monies of this day. Let us all mark it with a "white stone!" You have lent a charm to the occasion, which must have been seen and felt to be properly appreciated. And to the younger portion of those whom I am now addressing, I desire particularly to say, your teachers have this day placed before you another, among the many bright examples that are constantly challenging your love and imitation. May it be "like bread cast upon the waters!" and if anything you have seen, heard, or had inculcated upon you, in the ceremonies, incident to this joyous occasion, will cause you to retain one feeling of approbation, or one loving recollection of the noble cause of Agriculture, and Mechanics, in whose behalf we have assembled. I know it will give none more gratification than they will enjoy, and we shall feel something of good has been accomplished. In the youth of a country rests its hope. And I sincerely trust Association will soon place its magic hand upon the spot, where lately stood our male Academy, and from its ashes raise up an Institution, a worthy compeer of our loved and cherished Model School; a Seminary of learning which would do credit to any country, and of which this County and its teachers may justly feel proud. With heart-felt joy we join you in the gratulation expressed in the *first motto* on your beautiful banner,

"All hail! Science, Art, Agriculture!"

and, as we *reverse* it, allow us to *transpose* the sentence of the *second* one and enjoin upon you, *young Ladies*, by industrious application, and the acquisition of knowledge, to make yourselves

"Fair Wages for fair Work."

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to say a few words to you, as Tennesseans. By the unanimous voice of your sister States, you have had bestowed upon you the proud and distinguished appellation of the VOLUNTEER STATE. And most worthily and war-like do you wear it. In adversity, as in prosperity, to the sons of Tennessee, the call of their country has ever been as the voice of God, which no hesitation—no stopping—no calculation, as to their particular interest in the

dispute—and burying all former animosities, they have left their homes, and, willingly foregoing, but never forgetting their many *comforts* and *endearments*, they have rushed into the conflict, and *heroically* perilled all in her honored cause. They have never asked “why do I war outside the walls of Troy?” They have ever been eager to be “foremost in the fray.” And there is scarcely a battle-field, where American blood has been shed, on which that of your State has not, in one broad stream, flowed with it. And will you have it said of you—shall it be emblazoned upon your ESCUTCHEON—that you *fight* bravely, but *farm badly*? Never! never!! Behold your modest mother, “the good Old North State”—“Heaven’s blessings attend her!” and take courage. In her own modest merit, and in the beauty and excellence of her fair daughters,

“So graceful, so constant, yet to gentlest breath trembling,”

and in the unpretending cleverness and intelligence of her noble sons, she deserves your *love*. In her fixed determination to develope her Agricultural and Mechanical resources, and in the progress she has already made in doing so, she deserves your generous emulation. Up to the present year, without one dollar of State aid, and with a much less productive, and vastly more impoverished soil, she is outstripping you in the spirit of improvement. And I will here remark, that the duty I am now feebly attempting to discharge, is probably, at this very hour, being performed at her Annual State Fair, held in her Capital, by the late distinguished Chief Justice of the State, the Hon. THOMAS RUFFIN, who, in the height of his usefulness, volutarily exchanged the Ermine, which he had worn with so much *honor* to himself and *benefit* to the State, for the habiliments of the husbandman. The *man*, and the *occasion*, need only be mentioned in this connection, to enforce the point I make more strongly and eloquently than any language I can employ.

But, Tennesseans, if not the very first, your State is among the first to appropriate money from her Treasury, to promote the objects of our Association; and, in this view, I am sustained, up to 1852, by the able, enterprising, and scientific

Editor of the *Southern Cultivator*, whose *cheap* and *useful* periodical should be in the hands of every man in the *South*, at least. And, Citizens of Fayette County, feel still prouder, and rejoice more! The proposition for State aid came from *your own county*. And, whatever wreaths your young and worthy Representative may hereafter weave around his brow, none will *live longer*, or *grow greener*, than the one he placed there, as the introducer and successful advocate of the bill incorporating the "Agricultural Bureau of the State of Tennessee."

That bill, by which our State did herself so much credit, we should make but a beginning. Agriculture and Mechanics should be taught in our Free Schools, Academies, Colleges, and Universities. And labor must be elevated and dignified as it deserves to be; and we should have forthwith established, at least *one* Experimental Farm in each Grand Division of the State. The examples of Ancient Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Phœnicia, Palestine, China, India, as do those of France, England, Belgium, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, and Switzerland, all demonstrate to us the great benefit of governmental aid and fostering. And however much difference of opinion may exist, as to the power, in this particular, of the General Government, no one denies the right—I would I could say the *necessity*—of State assistance to these high objects. Parents, too, must stop crowding every son who has seen a college, or can parse a sentence in Latin or Greek, into what are called *the learned professions*. There is no more fatal error than this. The first thing the young man wakes up to, is, that he has frittered away the best part of his life, and has *trod no step forward*. This is a fruitful theme; but I must forego it; for, I fear, I have already detained you too long. Take the *thought*, and *complete the picture*. Imagine this great nation of freemen, with all their high attributes and many advantages, not only *thoroughly* and *scientifically*, but *Agriculturally* and *Mechanically* *educated*; would you not exclaim—

"Oh, wonder!

How many goodly creatures are there here!

How beauteous mankind is! oh, *brave, new world*!

That has such people in it."

In beauty and sublimity, it could fall but little below God's own Garden of Eden. Fulfill your high destiny, and make it so.

Would to God I had the power ! I would this day magnetize this mighty people into a movement which would *shame* the march of Peter the Hermit, and *enshadow the Crusades themselves*. Then should go up a *shout* of gladness and rejoicing, from the broad bosom of the Mississippi, to the blue mountains of East Tennessee—so *loud* and so *long*, that its reverberations should be caught up by the Atlantic, thrown back along our lakes to the peaceful Pacific, and *there* collected into an echo of such concentrated strength, that, as it is returned across the Rocky Mountains, it should ascend in a *holy hallelujah* to the Throne of the INVISIBLE. Then would I be willing to exclaim, My Country, now have “mine eyes seen thy great salvation !” God grant I may live to see it ! But, if it shall not be given me to gladden my eyes by this splendid vision, I pray Him, in His great mercy, to grant me to re-visit this earth, when it does occur, *if but to gaze upon it for one moment*. And there is no one present who will bend himself lower, or fall more prostrate, than I will, in the blest Temple where this bright effulgence shines.



